Media throughout the Subject Areas:

*Choose one of the following activities.*

**The Arts**

* Analyze **the use of the visual arts in advertising**. How do advertisers use color, line, shape, and composition to convey particular ideas and emotions? How are these ideas and emotions related to the products being marketed? Are the connections logical? Are they legitimate? After discussing these questions, students might work in small groups to create original products and market them using the visual arts.
* Invite students to analyze **the use of the performing arts in advertising**. What genres of music and dance are most often used to market products? Which genres are associated with which types of products? Does the use of these art forms reflect positively or negatively on the art and the artists who create it? Does it reinforce stereotypes? How does it relate to the target audience for the product? What messages does it convey about the products being marketed? Students might create original advertising soundtracks and/or choreography based on their findings.
* **Watch and analyze music videos**. (If students select and record the videos themselves, be sure to preview the videos before showing them to the class.) Students should consider the messages the videos are intended to convey and how these messages are influenced by camera angles, repetition, imagery and symbolism. They should also examine the relationship between the messages of the videos and the song lyrics. Then, each student might bring in a song for which no video exists (or for which they haven't seen the video) and create director's notes and/or a storyboard for an original video.
* Connect the arts and social studies by investigating **the use of design elements in political cartoons**. How do the cartoonists use line, shape, scale, and overall composition to convey specific ideas and feelings about the cartoons' subjects? Which techniques contribute to positive and negative impressions of the cartoons' subjects? Students might create their own political cartoons based on a current event in order to represent their learning.
* Reinforce visual literacy skills and connect the arts and social studies by **analyzing photographs in newspapers**. Students examine a variety of photographs and considering how light, shade, texture, shape, and scale contribute to the overall meaning of each photograph. (If students bring in their own photographs, be sure to preview them before sharing them with the class.) What has the photographer chosen to include, highlight, and/or exclude in each shot? Where is the photographer in relation to the subject? Has the photographer set up the composition of the shot or is it authentic? How does the photograph relate to the story it accompanies? How might it influence readers' attitudes? After answering these questions, students can prepare short essays or oral presentations based on in-depth analysis of a specific photograph. Alternatively, each student can choose a news story and replace the existing photograph with one of his or her choice; the rationale behind the substitution could be explained orally or in writing.
* Explore **how artists are portrayed** in popular movies and television shows. Taking an historical view, students might look at images of artists from various decades in the 19th and 20th centuries. They should consider the diverse images of artists (genius, eccentric, clairvoyant, celebrity) as well as whether and/or how these images have changed over time. Then, they can create video or three-dimensional collages to represent their findings.